



Veterans' and Military Affairs Advisory Board

New Mexico Veterans' Memorial

February 18, 2015

Minutes

Those Present:

Stephen Asher, Archie Garcia, Brian Leen, Roger Newall, Ken O'Keefe,
Steve Overman, David Spark, Jonathan Strawn, Chris Timm, GUESTS: Dick Brown, Tom Gutierrez, Beth Hemmerich

Those Excused:

Diallo Dphrepaulezz, Pat Gaston, Mike Scramski, Louis Tafoya,

I. Meeting Called to Order by Chairman Roger Newall at 9:03 am

II. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2015

- a. There were no written January minutes to approve. The January minutes were verbally accepted.

III. Public Comments – House Bill 193 -

- Dick Brown and Tom Gutierrez, representing the USS New Mexico addressed the Board with their request for representation at Legislation. The USS Albuquerque, USS New Mexico and USS Santa Fe are requesting \$100K to help Navy League New Mexico support its youth programs and all three New Mexico named submarines.
- Brown and Gutierrez encouraged Board members to attend the Legislative session and support the House Committee.
- Chris Timm mentioned that when the USS Albuquerque is de-commissioned that the New Mexico Veterans Memorial should try to request memorabilia; such as the periscope.

Note: A fact sheet was handed out on House Bill 193 – Request for State Appropriation

IV. Old Business

- a. Albuquerque Employee Coins
- Most of the coins have been passed out. Both the Fire and Police Academy are up to date.
 - Approximately 50 coins remain to be passed out.
- b. Hiring Preference –
- The hiring of veterans is going well. Roger Newall does the hiring training and he reported that there are approximately two new veterans per training session. This amounts to 25-30 new employees per month.
- c. Membership
- Chris Timm and Mike Scramski are working on filing membership's information.
 - There is one open spot to fill on the Advisory Board.
 - Four current Board member positions are up for renewal in September.
- d. Projects
- Rail Runner and Bus Program Update
 - Atlanta, Georgia, has expressed interest in following the Albuquerque bus program to implement into their city. Roger Newall has given Atlanta all of the information and criteria that Albuquerque uses to operate our bus program.
 - Roger Newall reiterated that Albuquerque's bus plan was not put in place to track money saved and money earned. Albuquerque offers the bus plan as transportation to veterans, as a service.
 - Motorcycle Plates Update

- It was reported that there is a glitch with the Motor Vehicle Department regarding the two car/two motorcycle plates. The MVD has stated that vehicles receive two plates, no more.
- There is communication trying to determine how to fix this dilemma so the plates can be received by veterans.
- Steve Overman brought up an additional project: The Two Acre Lot
 - The Veterans Integration Center (VIC) is requesting more land. There is a vacant plot of land that the VIC would like to receive grant money to build a shelter for the homeless to stay at. This will eliminate many of the homeless staying at hotels and will allow them to stay at a shelter.
- Another additional project was brought to the Board's attention: The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Run
 - It was asked if anyone knew the price to participate in this run? There should be a family price and an individual price that should be posted to the City website and the Run website.
- Chris Timm brought up another additional project: Flag Drop Off Boxes for Flag Retiring
 - Chris handed out a copy of what the boxes would look like and cost. For \$13-16 plus shipping, boxes can be purchased from www.keeptidy.com. Chris would like to get drop off boxes for the City of Gallup. They can place the flag retirement boxes at libraries or additional locations as determined. Chris would like to add this item to the next month's Board meeting as an official Project.
- Roger announced he has one additional project to bring to the Board: Senior Center Honor Walls
 - Roger informed the Board that there will be a wall of honor placed at all senior centers around Albuquerque. The wall will be an 18X62 glass faced box that contains a current photo alongside the past photo and the military symbol and a possible short biography of the veteran who is a member at that senior center. This project is to help perpetuate the existence of the veterans in our City.
 - Current locations already on display: North Domingo, Barreلاس and Highland.
 - Plans to complete all eight senior centers in the City by the end of the year.

e. Legislation

- Pending Bills
 - Roger Newall handed out a 9 page summary of the Veterans Services Department bills
 - It was discussed that there was an amendment to House Bill 97 to do away with the \$10 million dollar cap. Also to do away with the three tier system.
 - Board members were invited to attend the legislation session on Wednesday, February 25, 2015, for a meet-and-greet followed by a program in the rotunda.
 - Ken announced there would be a bus leaving from the NMVM at 7:00 on Wednesday. Seats for the bus are \$5. If anyone is interested in riding the bus they need to sign up and pre-pay at the Memorial.
 - There was brief discussion regarding taxes and retirement for military veterans. New Mexico needs to be able to compete with other states for retirees.

f. Update Future Events

- Roger Newall reiterated that Future Events were previously discussed under Projects.

V. New Business:

- Roger commented that Melinda McCormick was interested in opening a USO room at the Albuquerque Sunport airport.
 - It was brought up that USO rooms are typically only used once the passenger has been through clearance.
 - The Sunport is not a connecting airport. It is a final destination, so passengers will not use a USO room.
 - Roger commented that he would pursue this and report back to the Board at another meeting.
- Gain Base Access
 - It was discussed how to increase the base access for veterans who have received awards to be able to use the UX, commissary, and additional businesses on base.

- Facilities on base are closing because they are not being used. This will increase the usage of facilities if veterans are able to access the base easier.
- It was stated that the DoD would like to exterminate state-side commissaries, as they don't get used.
- Dave Sparks mentioned that many veterans would probably like to use the base commissary because it is what they know. The value the social aspect of the commissary.
 - What needs to happen
 1. Getting the access to the base
 2. This is a "thank you" to those who have stepped beyond and this is more than a certificate that hangs on a wall.
- Future Events:
 - Wednesday, February 25, 2015, Legislation
 - March 6, 2015, Tribute to Women in Military Monument at the NMVM
 - April 11, 2015, Baton Celebration on Lomas

VI. Setting of Future Meetings – March 18, 2014 at 9:00 am at the NM Veterans' Memorial

VII. Adjourn – 10:14 am.